The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin

Summer 2006

Rembrandt and His Circle

Drawings and Prints

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Director's Note

IT IS DIFFICULT to imagine an artist whose four-hundredth birthday could be celebrated as meaningfully, with as much emotional impact, by the general public as Rembrandt van Rijn. The reason may be that his art is so relentlessly human. In his well-known self-portraits, we see him age, and we see time take its toll on his flesh. Old people abound in his other portraits as well, and in his history paintings and his drawings. He was a connoisseur of mortality. Thus, the fact that he was born on a particular day (July 15, 1606), in a particular place (the university town of Leiden), seems a little less trivial than it might for another artist. The anniversary taking place this year has been the occasion for numerous commemorative exhibitions, especially in the Netherlands but also in England, France, Germany, and the United States.

Just over ten years ago, The Metropolitan Museum of Art presented "Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt." The focus of that important exhibition, which contained paintings, drawings, and prints, was connoisseurship. This *Bulletin*, and the accompanying in-house presentation, lean on the results of that 1995 exhibition. However, the focus is different, as more attention is paid here to Rembrandt's pupils and to other artists from his immediate circle. Furthermore, this year's presentation is devoted purely to works on paper. While paintings can be kept permanently on display, drawings and prints cannot—their susceptibility to light does not allow it. The celebration of the artist's birthday seemed the perfect occasion to take his best drawings and prints out of storage again, together with drawings by his pupils.

The Museum's impressive collection of drawings and prints by Rembrandt has been built up since the early twentieth century. In 1920, George Coe Graves gave the Museum five fine prints. Nine years later, the bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer was of the utmost importance, with seven drawings, including the classical landscape *Cottage among Trees* (fig. 23), and twelve prints. Another highly significant gift came from Felix M. Warburg and his family in 1941. It contained twenty prints, including a first state of *The Three Crosses*, printed on vellum (fig. 35)—the culmination of Rembrandt's virtuosity as a printmaker. Over the years, many individuals have given drawings and prints by Rembrandt and his school, considerably enhancing the Metropolitan's collection. The latest addition to the Rembrandt group, arriving in 2005, is *Study Sheet with Three Women and a Boy* (fig. 10), bequeathed from the collection of Frits and Rita Markus. It relates beautifully to *Two Studies of a Woman Reading* of the same period, from the H. O. Havemeyer Collection (fig. 8). In the field of Rembrandt's pupils, the Museum has recently acquired many interesting sheets, such as those by Ferdinand Bol, Lambert Doomer, Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, Nicolaes Maes, and Johannes Ruisscher illustrated herein. In many cases, the Frits and Rita Markus Fund was essential to the acquisition. Slowly but surely, these newly acquired works are bringing the Museum's collection of Dutch drawings up to par with those of Italian and French drawings. It is to be hoped that this development, gratifying to anybody interested in northern European art as well as in old master drawings, will continue.

We owe thanks for this *Bulletin* to its author, Michiel Plomp, who continued to work diligently on it after departing the Museum to assume the post of chief curator at the Teylers Museum, Haarlem, in his native Netherlands.

Philippe de Montebello
Director

This publication was made possible through the generosity of the Lila Acheson Wallace Fund for The Metropolitan Museum of Art, established by the cofounder of Reader's Digest.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin
Summer 2006
Volume LXIV, Number 1 (ISSN 0026-1521)

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On the cover: Detail of Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait Leaning on a Stone Sill*, 1639 (see p. 14)

TREASURED THROUGHOUT Europe since the seventeenth century, Rembrandt's prints (and perhaps his drawings) were objects of esteem already during his lifetime (1606–1669). Early proof of the widespread admiration for the Dutch master's prints comes from the famous North Italian Baroque painter Guercino, who wrote in 1660: "I have seen various works of his in prints, which have come down to our region. They are very beautiful in execution, engraved with good taste and done in a fine manner.... I sincerely esteem him as a great artist."

In 1641, when the artist was only in his mid-thirties, he was praised in a German publication as one of the most noteworthy printmakers of his time. The Genoese artist Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione's emulation of Rembrandt's etching style around 1630–35 and the Alsatian artist Sebastien Stoskopff's inclusion of the artist's etchings in his painted still lifes around the same time corroborate this extensive early reputation. Other seventeenth-century admirers were the English diarist John Evelyn and the French collector Michel de Marolles. Evelyn praised the artist in 1662 as the "incomparable Reinbrand, whose Etchings and gravings are of particular spirit," and in 1666 Marolles owned a remarkable group of several hundred of Rembrandt's prints.

Contrary to the etchings, most of Rembrandt's drawings were not intended for the outside world. Because he made them for personal use, they did not circulate until 1656–58, when the artist had to sell large parts of his art collection, including examples of his own work. After that, his drawings quickly spread through Holland, soon to be followed by the neighboring countries. Before the close of the century, they were available on the London art market, and Roger de Piles, the French connoisseur, writer, and spy for Louis XIV, was the proud owner of many Rembrandt drawings in 1699. According to him, they had more "sel & piquant que les productions des meilleurs Peintres" ("wit and piquancy than the productions of the best painters").

In part because of his fame, Rembrandt was a sought-after teacher. The exact number of his pupils is unknown but may have been about forty to fifty. Some of them, such as Ferdinand Bol, Govaert Flinck, and Nicolaes Maes, would become important artists in their own right. The pupils closely imitated Rembrandt's style and technique, creating works that are sometimes hard to distinguish from those of the master. Although some of his students later went their own way artistically, the overall group of works is large, captivating, and cohesive. Here, in the section of this *Bulletin* devoted to Rembrandt's pupils (pp. 34–46), it is the drawings that are singled out. Apart from their beauty and sheer quality, these drawings are fascinating in that the pupils' works on paper have undergone serious investigation only in recent decades, resulting in quite a number of repercussions and changes of attribution in the master's oeuvre—a process that continues today.

The second-youngest child in a large family, Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn was born in Leiden, the Netherlands, on July 15, 1606. His father, Harmen Gerritsz., came from a family of millers in Leiden and was half owner of the mill De Rijn. He called himself Vande Rijn after his mill. Rembrandt was brought up in the Dutch Reformed Church, to which his father belonged. His mother, Cornelia "Neeltgen" Willemsdr. van Zuytbrouck, had been raised Roman Catholic but converted to Protestantism just before her marriage. For seven years, Rembrandt attended the local Latin school, studying Greek, Latin, and classical literature and history. In 1620, at the age of fourteen, he enrolled at the University of Leiden, but he stayed only a few months, as he wanted to become an artist. His parents allowed him this ambition and apprenticed him for three years, beginning in 1621, to the local artist Jacob Isaacsz. van Swanenburgh (1571–1638), a painter of portraits and of scenes akin to those produced by Hieronymus Bosch a century earlier.

After his three-year apprenticeship, Rembrandt signed on for another six months of study, probably around 1624–25, this time with the renowned Amsterdam artist Pieter Lastman (1583–1633). Lastman was a painter of history pieces heavily influenced by Italian art. This extra apprenticeship period makes clear how serious Rembrandt was about his profession and reveals his determination to become a history painter. Lastman's engaging narrative paintings would remain a source of inspiration for Rembrandt throughout his career (see figs. 26, 27). Specifically regarding the art of drawing, Rembrandt took Lastman's drawings in pen and brush and brown ink as a model. In his earliest drawings, there are the same fine yet loose pen strokes and the same stress on the shadow lines as in his master's sheets. Another habit he adopted from Lastman was that of making drawings in red and black chalk after the living model. An example of this—created a few years after the apprenticeship period—is *Seated Old Man* of 1631 (fig. 1). Rembrandt achieved the wonderful plasticity of the figure through a very consistent means of conveying light, not only on the face and hands but also on the robe, which grows gradually darker toward the right. Such early red-and-black-chalk figure studies were made for practice, as a general preparation for figures in etchings or paintings.

After the half year in Amsterdam, Rembrandt returned to Leiden as an independent master. During this period, he collaborated closely and may even have shared a studio with Jan Lievens (1607–1674), a fellow townsman one year his junior who had also apprenticed with Lastman.

FIGURE 1 *(opposite)*
Rembrandt
Seated Old Man, 1631
Red and black chalk; 8 15/16 × 5 13/16 in. (22.7 × 14.7 cm)
Teylers Museum, Haarlem

FIGURE 2
Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607–1674)
Bust of an Old Man in Profile, ca. 1628
Red and black chalk; 5⅜ × 5 7/16 in. (13.7 × 13.8 cm)
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.,
Gift of Mrs. Lessing J. Rosenwald

Because they used the same models, drew and painted the same subjects, and, of course, influenced each other, it is not surprising that within a few years their works were being confused (in some cases until recent times). *Bust of an Old Man in Profile* (fig. 2) was considered a genuine Rembrandt deep into the twentieth century. However, the work does not have the plasticity that most of Rembrandt's drawings exhibit at this time. It is still conceived as a series of lines and planes and therefore has a flatter effect than a typical Rembrandt. As the profile depiction is also more standard for Lievens than for Rembrandt, it seems likely that the work is by Lievens. During the period that Rembrandt worked in Leiden, he must have earned some fame, as he was already instructing his first pupils, including Gerard Dou (1613–1675) and Isack Jouderville (1612/13–1645/48).

Still in Leiden, Rembrandt also started to make his first prints, such as *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (fig. 3), dating to about 1625–26. The composition derives from a print by the sixteenth-century Leiden native Lucas van Leyden (see fig. 4). Rembrandt's earliest etchings are rather schematic and uncertain and, above all, linear, showing the influence of Lastman's style. But within a few years, the artist had made amazing progress with the etching needle, as is obvious from *The Artist's Mother* (fig. 5), executed in 1628, where the lines are secure yet beautifully airy and sketchlike; the forms are not so much described by line as engendered by chiaroscuro, which he achieved by varying the distances between the parallel hatchings and by biting the lines to different depths. During the second half of the 1620s, the artist began his unique sequence of etched self-portraits. Many of the early ones are rather studylike, meant as explorations of expression for use only by himself and others in his studio (see fig. 6).

The year 1631 saw the end of the collaboration between Lievens and Rembrandt, as they both left the relatively sedate university town of Leiden. Lievens went to England to undertake work for the English court, and Rembrandt settled in the busy commercial center of Amsterdam. From 1631 to 1635 he worked under the auspices of the art dealer Hendrick Uylenburgh, who had a successful art gallery with an "academy," or studio, attached. Rembrandt became a very successful painter, initially because of his portraits, such as *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp* (Mauritshuis, The Hague), but later also thanks to his biblical and mythological paintings.

Through Uylenburgh, the young painter from Leiden would have met a number of prominent Amsterdam residents; the most important new acquaintance, however, was the dealer's young niece from Friesland, Saskia Uylenburgh. She was the daughter of Rombartus Uylenburgh, a former mayor of Leeuwarden, the capital of that northern province. On his exquisite portrait of Saskia (fig. 7), made in all likelihood in Friesland, Rembrandt notes when the banns were called (which at the time was often regarded as the actual wedding day): "dit is naer mijn huijsvrou

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FIGURE 3
Rembrandt
The Rest on the Flight into Egypt, ca. 1625–26
Etching (only state); 8 7/16 × 6 1/2 in. (21.7 × 16.5 cm)
Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

FIGURE 4
Lucas van Leyden (Netherlandish, 1494–1533)
The Rest on the Flight into Egypt, ca. 1506
Engraving; 6 1/4 × 5 1/2 in. (15.9 × 13.9 cm)
Prentenkabinet der Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden

FIGURE 5
Rembrandt
The Artist's Mother, 1628
Etching (second state of two); 2 11/16 × 2 3/8 in. (6.8 × 6.6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1918 18.72

FIGURE 6
Rembrandt
Self-Portrait, 1630
Etching (second state of two); 2 7/8 × 2 1/8 in. (7.2 × 6 cm)
The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

geconterfeijt / do sij 21 jaer oud was den derden / dach als wij getroudt waren / den 8 junius 1633" ("This is drawn after my wife, when she was 21 years old, the third day of our betrothal, the 8th of June 1633"). It is a rare example of a drawing in which one can actually feel that the draftsman is in love. Rembrandt made the drawing in silverpoint on prepared parchment, a technique and support almost unique in his oeuvre. He may have taken some of these prepared parchment sheets with him when traveling to visit Saskia in Friesland. The support and medium have the advantage of being usable almost anywhere without the artist's having to carry an inkpot around or worry that fresh chalk would rub off the paper.

Initially, the young couple remained with Uylenburgh, but after their first son, Rombartus, was born in December 1635, they rented their own house. Between 1635 and 1641 four children were born, of whom only the last one, Titus, lived to adulthood. The other three died within a couple of weeks of their births. Despite these repeated personal tragedies, Rembrandt's fame as an artist kept growing. His increasing reputation caused pupils to flock in, among them Ferdinand Bol, Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, and Govaert Flinck (see pp. 35, 38, 40).

In the thirties, Rembrandt extended his drawing activities enormously, partly on account of his many students. His studio collection contained drawings that he made specifically to be copied by his students—they will certainly have fired his own imagination as well—and sheets that he made while working on, or in preparation for, new paintings or etchings. Those sheets were not, however, preparatory in the conventional sense; he made them mostly to stimulate his faculties of invention and expression. Rembrandt hardly ever made any real preparatory studies for etchings or paintings, whether for complete compositions or for individual figures. Usually, he would work out a representation directly on the panel, canvas, or copper plate.

Rembrandt's inspiration came mostly from the world around him. Drawing from life ("naar het leven"), just as Karel van Mander, the influential biographer and art theoretician, had recommended, was an important point of departure for him. Examples of drawings after the living model from this period are *Two Studies of a Woman Reading* (fig. 8), *Old Man Leaning on a Stick* (fig. 9), *Study Sheet with Three Women and a Boy* (fig. 10), and the aforementioned *Seated Old Man* (fig. 1). The old man in figure 9, whom Rembrandt may have encountered on an Amsterdam street, is clearly depicted in the act of listening. Looking upward in rapt attention, he leans forward on the stick in order to hear better. The close cropping of the drawing suggests that the sheet was once larger and probably bore more studies of the same figure. Sketching a figure more than once enabled Rembrandt to explore the figure from different angles and in various poses, often catching different moods or, as in the case of *Two Studies of a Woman Reading*, different effects of light. In the lower study, the woman—who has sometimes been identified as his wife, Saskia—appears in full daylight, while in the upper study, she sits almost completely in the dark, leaning forward to catch a few glimmers of light for her reading; the darkness surrounding her is depicted with strongly diverging hatchings. *Study Sheet with Three Women and a Boy* seems to be, above all, an exercise in capturing the figure and mood of the elderly woman, with her gesticulating arms and open hands; Rembrandt has depicted her in clever foreshortening.

Another, more exotic example of a drawing from life is *Three Studies of an Elephant with Attendant* (fig. 11). The artist's choice of black chalk is very effective for the characterization of

FIGURE 7
Rembrandt
Saskia in a Straw Hat, 1633
Silverpoint on white prepared vellum; 7 5/16 × 4 3/16 in. (18.5 × 10.7 cm)
Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

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FIGURE 8
Rembrandt
Two Studies of a Woman Reading, 1635–40
Pen and brown iron-gall ink; 6 13/16 × 5 7/8 in. (17.3 × 15 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929
29.100.932

FIGURE 9
Rembrandt
Old Man Leaning on a Stick, 1635–40
Pen and brown ink; 5 5/16 × 3 1/16 in. (13.5 × 7.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 1975.1.796

FIGURE 10
Rembrandt
Study Sheet with Three Women and a Boy, 1635–40
Pen and brown ink; 8 11/16 × 6 7/16 in. (22 × 16.4 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, From the Collection of Rita and Frits Markus, Bequest of Rita Markus, 2005
2005.330.16

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FIGURE 11
Rembrandt
Three Studies of an Elephant with Attendant, 1637
Black chalk; 9 7/16 × 13 15/16 in. (23.9 × 35.4 cm)
Albertina, Vienna

the animal's rough, gray skin. We are probably being treated to three views of the same elephant—lying, standing, and in motion. The trunk of the moving elephant has been given in two positions (the lower one disappears into the legs of the attendant). We may assume that this creature is Hanske, a well-known performing elephant born in Ceylon in 1630, who made many journeys through Europe before he died in 1655. Obviously, the exhibition of such animals was an exceptional event and a great opportunity for artists to observe and draw them and later use them in their own inventions.

Inspiration also came from the works of his predecessors. Rembrandt owned a large, encyclopedic art collection with an impressive share of so-called paper art, including many prints (and drawings) by or after such important fifteenth-, sixteenth-, and seventeenth-century artists as Albrecht Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, Hendrick Goltzius, Peter Paul Rubens, Andrea Mantegna, Raphael, and Michelangelo. By looking intensely at the works of these masters, admiring their solutions, and sometimes even borrowing them, Rembrandt could communicate, in a way, with his predecessors; he must have felt connected with the age-old tradition of depicting certain stories, especially those from the Bible. An early example is his use of Lucas van Leyden's engraving *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* for his etching of the same subject (figs. 3, 4). In later years, his motivation may have been "emulation"—*aemulatio* being a well-known concept in the art theory of the time—meaning that Rembrandt tried to ameliorate or even outdo certain compositions of his predecessors. For example, Rembrandt used the figure of Christ from Dürer's 1511 woodcut *The Cleansing of the Temple* (fig. 12) in his own 1635 depiction of the topic (fig. 13)—but not because he was incapable of inventing his own Christ. No artist who borrowed for that reason would ever have used such a figure in an identical situation;

he would surely have tried to disguise the borrowing. Rembrandt probably intended for his version to be compared with Dürer's, to show that he could depict the tumult that Christ caused in a much more dramatic and realistic way than the renowned German master had done.

Rembrandt's paraphrase of Leonardo's *Last Supper* (fig. 14), dating to about 1633–35, is a special case—a highly interesting reworking by the Dutch master of one of the most famous

FIGURE 12
Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471–1528)
The Cleansing of the Temple, 1511
Woodcut; 5 × 3 1⁄16 in. (12.6 × 9.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Junius S. Morgan, 1919 19.73.177

FIGURE 13
Rembrandt
The Cleansing of the Temple, 1635
Etching (second state of two); 5 ½ × 6 ¼ in. (14 × 17.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Felix M. Warburg and his family, 1941 41.1.49

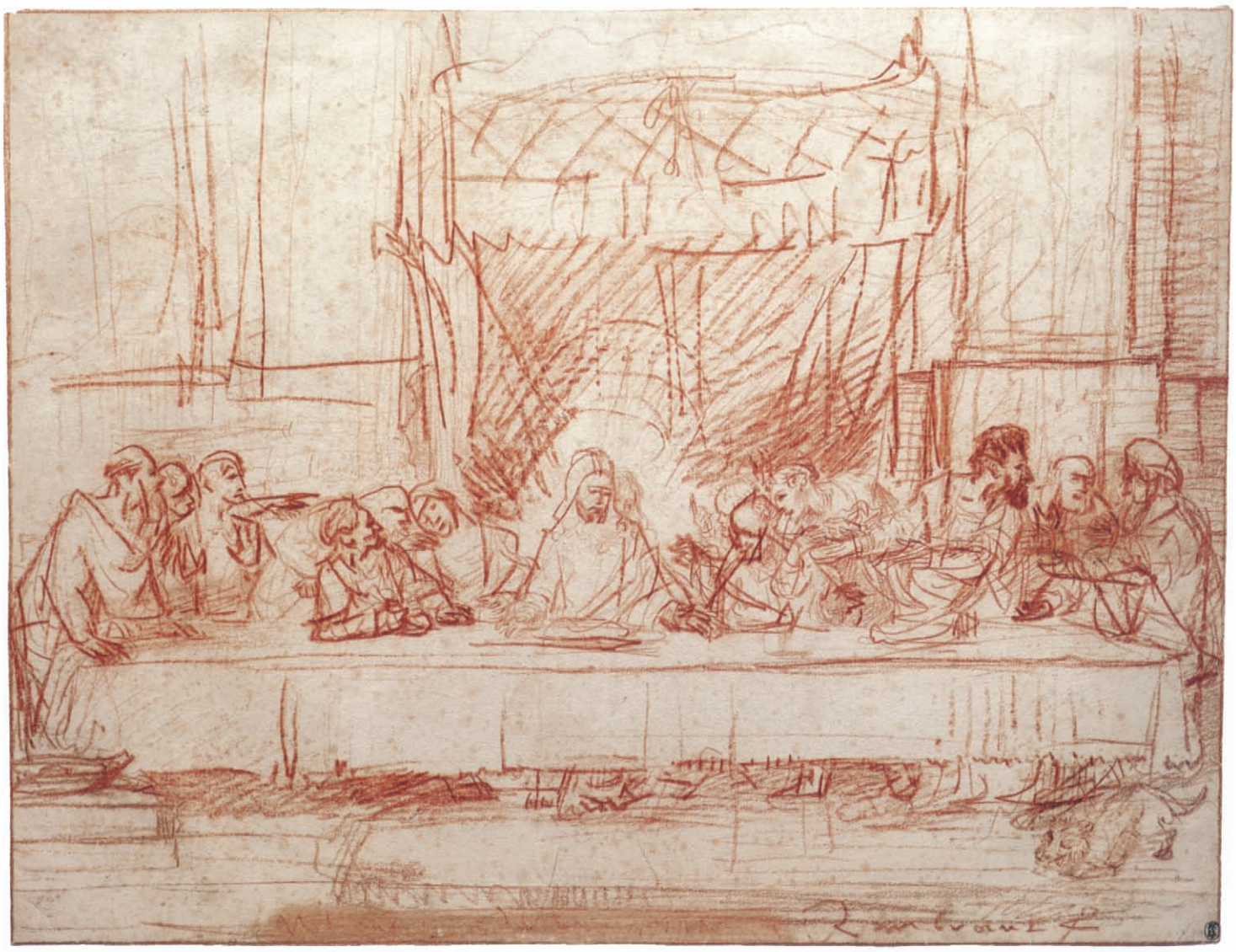


FIGURE 14
Rembrandt
The Last Supper, after Leonardo da Vinci, ca. 1633–35
Red chalk; 14¼ × 18¾ in. (36.2 × 47.5 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 1975.1.794

compositions of the Italian Renaissance. Rembrandt had never seen Leonardo's original in Milan; instead, he knew only a rather stiff engraving by Giovanni Pietro Birago (fig. 15). Rembrandt's impressively sized copy (it is his largest known drawing) outswaggers Birago's print, especially in height. Rembrandt started with a light first sketch, which was quite close to the Italian engraving. Some areas, like Christ's face, he worked out in some detail. However, he must soon have realized that he needed to go his own way, and with renewed vigor and greater assurance, he drew the figures again—sometimes changing them considerably, as with the figure of Christ—in order to emphasize the apostles' responses to Christ's announcement that one of them would betray him. Close comparison reveals that all the attitudes of the heads, arms, and hands have changed slightly. More importantly, the somewhat mannered and empty movements of the disciples in Birago's print have been replaced by natural and clearly recognizable expressions and emotions, different for each apostle. Rembrandt added a monumental canopy where the print has a large, empty space. This change helps to project the figures farther into

the foreground. Placed asymmetrically, the canopy subverts Leonardo's Renaissance symmetry and adds to the drama of the scene below. Rather exceptionally, Rembrandt signed the sheet and wrote a now indecipherable comment. Since his drawings were mostly for his own use, the signature is rare. It has been suggested that he signed the drawing in order to underscore the fact that the execution, though obviously not the invention, was his. Rembrandt never created his own Last Supper, but he did incorporate effects of Leonardo's work unmistakably into some of his paintings, such as the 1638 *Wedding Feast of Samson* (Gemäldegalerie, Dresden).

The production of etchings in the 1630s was not as large as one might have expected after the promising start in Leiden. This deficit probably had to do with the many portrait commissions he received in these years. Nevertheless, there are masterpieces to be found, such as the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* of 1634. Another is his famous *Self-Portrait Leaning on a Stone Sill* (fig. 16). The latter was inspired, in part, by Titian's *Portrait of a Man* (National Gallery, London), which at the time was in an Amsterdam collection and was thought to represent the Italian poet Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533). Obviously, Rembrandt wished to compare himself with a famous painter and a Renaissance poet to boot. The self-portrait is a good example of the clear, linear approach that prevailed in his etchings of the late 1630s. More and more, the artist used the etching needle as if it were a pencil, creating prints that look like fine sketches (see fig. 17). This sketchy style is beautifully apparent in the most Baroque of Rembrandt's prints, the large *Death of the Virgin* (fig. 18).

The plate for *The Death of the Virgin* is one of the earliest in which Rembrandt used drypoint to any considerable degree. Drypoint is the technique of scratching lines directly into the copper plate instead of using acid to bite the design into the plate, which is the normal procedure for an etching. The ridge of metal pushed up to the side of the furrow, called the burr, retains ink, and the resulting impression reveals a soft, broad, velvety line, which gives drypoint its unique character. The chair at the lower right shows the familiar dark, soft, saturated lines of drypoint. The metal burr can also be removed with a scraper, resulting in thin, delicate, taut lines. The latter procedure was used here for the angel and clouds. Prints executed exclusively in drypoint, such as Rembrandt's *Three Crosses* (fig. 35), are extremely rare.

FIGURE 15
Giovanni Pietro Birago (Italian, active ca. 1471/74–1513)
Last Supper with a Spaniel, ca. 1500
Engraving; 9 × 17¾ in. (23 × 45 cm)
Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

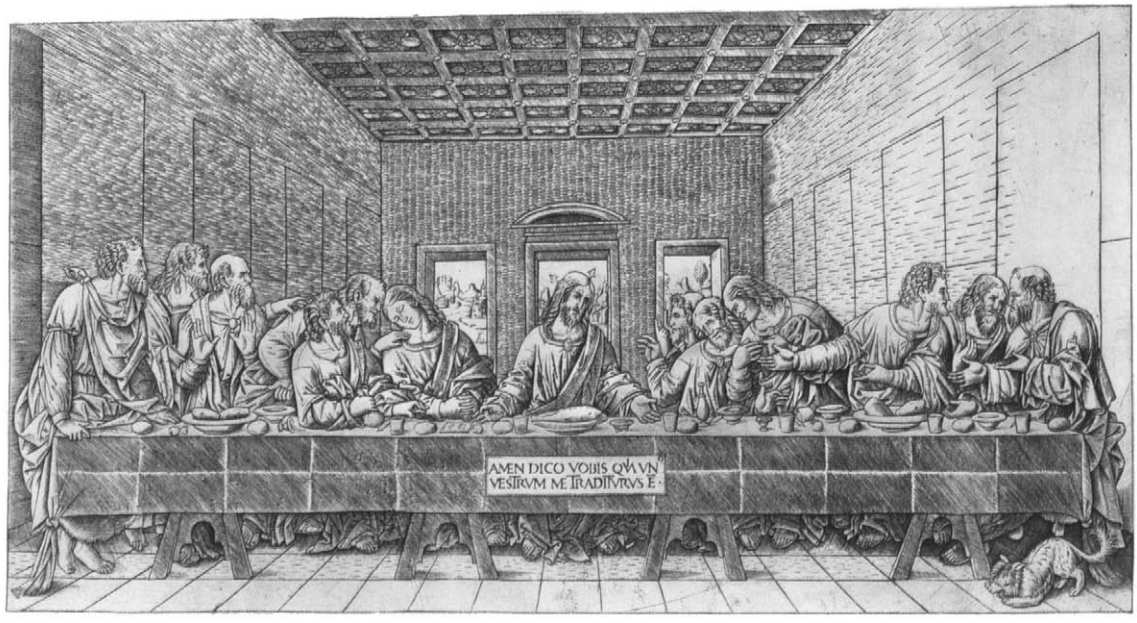


FIGURE 16 *(opposite)*
Rembrandt
Self-Portrait Leaning on a Stone Sill, 1639
Etching (second state of two); 8 5/16 × 6 5/8 in. (21.1 × 16.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 29.107.25

FIGURE 17
Rembrandt
Studies of the Head of Saskia and Others, 1636
Etching (only state); 6 × 5 in. (15.1 × 12.6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Julie Parsons Redmond, 1959 60.534.28

FIGURE 18 *(opposite)*
Rembrandt
The Death of the Virgin, 1639
Etching and drypoint (second state of three); 16 7/16 × 12 5/16 in. (41.4 × 31.3 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Ida Kammerer, in memory of her husband, Frederic Kammerer, M.D., 1933 33.79.14

FIGURE 19
Rembrandt's house in the Breestraat, Amsterdam
Museum het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam

In 1639 Rembrandt felt confident enough to acquire a large house in the Breestraat, now called the Jodenbreestraat (the house has become the Museum het Rembrandthuis; see fig. 19). It cost him the considerable sum of 13,000 guilders, which he was allowed to pay in installments. The acquisition of this house, though not extravagant at the time, given Rembrandt's popularity and great reputation, would in the end be a turning point in his financial fortunes. The house was next to that of Hendrick Uylenburgh, and the fashionable neighborhood counted many other friends and acquaintances of the artist.

In the 1640s Rembrandt exhibited a newfound interest in landscape. It has been suggested, rather romantically, that it was Saskia's death in 1642 that made him flee their house to find solace in the countryside around Amsterdam. Whatever the reason, we know of a large group of masterly landscape drawings and etchings created from about 1640 until about 1650, which, reflecting the essence of the Dutch countryside, have become icons. Especially phenomenal in these works is the depiction of the effects of light and atmosphere, often including particular weather conditions. As there is only one drawing that was clearly used as the basis of a landscape etching, we may conclude that the drawn landscapes were not preparatory.

Dating to about 1640 or even a few years earlier, *Two Cottages* (fig. 20) is among Rembrandt's earliest landscapes. It provides a beautiful illustration of the artist's tendency to combine, in his drawings, carefully evoked details with boldly and schematically drawn forms. While elaborately specifying numerous details of the first cottage, he suggested the second one with a few mere lines. *Cottage near the Entrance to a Wood* (fig. 21), signed and dated 1644, has a very different character, as it is much more worked out. In rare fashion for the artist, it shows large areas of wash without any pen. The degree of finish, the size—it is his largest known landscape drawing—and the signature could be indications that this is one of the few sheets the master made for the market. (There is one known document, from the mid-1640s, mentioning a trade in his drawings.) The landscapist Lambert Doomer, an admirer of Rembrandt's work and possibly one of his pupils (see p. 37), must have thought highly of this drawing—he may even have owned it—since he created an elaborate copy of it (fig. 22) and several related versions.

The sheet *Cottage among Trees* (fig. 23), dating to about 1650, is another rather finished landscape drawing, though less painterly than *Cottage near the Entrance to a Wood*. Rembrandt may have begun it on the spot—one can almost feel the wind in the trees—but he probably completed it in the studio, as he added a strip of paper at the right edge of the original sheet on which he rounded off the tree branches, the terp, the fence, and the horizon. By doing so, he gave the composition a beautiful and imposing equilibrium of almost classical stature.

Some of the landscape etchings are so sketchy and lifelike that one is inclined to think that Rembrandt took prepared etching plates along on his walks and drew on them outdoors. *View of Amsterdam from the Northwest* (fig. 24) of 1640–41 is a candidate for this uncommon working practice, because Rembrandt drew the city profile on the copper plate as he would have seen it on the spot, while the print, reversing the plate, shows the profile of Amsterdam backward. If he had created the plate in the studio, based on an outdoor sketch, he would certainly have corrected the mirror image. In a completely different vein is the 1643 etching *Landscape with Three Trees* (fig. 25), one of the artist's most worked-out, most dramatic landscapes. The scene is imaginary. The foreground is in deep shade, while the low-lying fields in the background bask in abundant sunshine. Behind the three powerful trees, the sky has just cleared to brightness. Many tiny figures populate the near-heroic landscape, among them a draftsman in full sun on the right. While *View of Amsterdam from the Northwest* resembles a sketch, *Landscape with Three Trees* is almost like a small oil painting.

The Museum owns two interesting compositional drawings from the 1640s, both executed in pen and brown ink. One is a delicately drawn Old Testament scene and the other an almost aggressively sketched satire. The former, *The*

FIGURE 20
Rembrandt
Two Cottages, 1635–40
Pen and brown ink, heightened with white; 5⅞ × 7½ in. (14.9 × 19.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 1975.1.801

FIGURE 21 *(opposite, top)*
Rembrandt
Cottage near the Entrance to a Wood, 1644
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, and black chalk, over traces of red chalk; 11¾ × 17¾ in. (29.8 × 44.9 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 1975.1.792

FIGURE 22 *(opposite, bottom)*
Lambert Doomer (Dutch, 1624–1700)
Cottage near the Entrance to a Wood,
ca. 1660
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, over traces of red chalk; 11 11/16 × 17 3/16 in. (29.7 × 43.7 cm)
Collection Frits Lugt, Fondation Custodia, Institut Néerlandais, Paris

FIGURE 23
Rembrandt
Cottage among Trees, ca. 1650
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, on paper washed with brown; 6¼ × 12⅛ in. (17.2 × 30.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 29.100.939

FIGURE 24 *(opposite, top)*
Rembrandt
View of Amsterdam from the Northwest, 1640–41
Etching (only state); 8 1/16 × 12½ in. (20.5 × 31.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 29.107.16

FIGURE 25 *(opposite, bottom)*
Rembrandt
Landscape with Three Trees, 1643
Etching, drypoint, and burin (only state); 8⅜ × 11⅛ in. (21.3 × 28.3 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 29.107.31

Wedding Night of Tobias and Sarah (fig. 26), presents a scene from the apocryphal book of Tobit (8:1–4), in which Tobit's son, Tobias, on his wedding night makes an offering to God of the heart and liver of a great fish in order to cast out the devil Asmodeus, who had killed Sarah's seven previous husbands before the marriages could be consummated. The sheet demonstrates Rembrandt's continued use, many years after his apprenticeship had ended, of the compositions of his former master Pieter Lastman. He based the sketch on Lastman's 1611 painting of the same subject (fig. 27). In a departure from Lastman's work, the protagonists face each other directly; their intense prayer forces the devil to leave without any further fight. In *Satire on Art Criticism* (fig. 28), Rembrandt depicts a connoisseur sitting on a barrel pontificating. His long donkey's ears—a centuries-old symbol of stupidity—are noticed by none of the admiring listeners. Only the man squatting on the right remains unimpressed. Such satire is rare not only in Rembrandt's art but also in seventeenth-century Dutch art as a whole.

Satire on Art Criticism may refer to a specific, now forgotten, event, or even to a specific critic or unhappy client of Rembrandt himself. The latter seems unlikely, however, as the artist was quite famous and successful in the 1640s. In 1640 or 1641 he received the prestigious commission to paint one of the group portraits for the

FIGURE 26
Rembrandt
The Wedding Night of Tobias and Sarah, 1640s
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, heightened with white; 6⅞ × 9⅜ in. (17.6 × 23.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1906
06.1042.2

FIGURE 27
Pieter Lastman (Dutch, 1583–1633)
The Wedding Night of Tobias and Sarah, 1611
Oil on wood; 16¼ × 22¾ in. (41.2 × 57.8 cm)
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection

FIGURE 28
Rembrandt
Satire on Art Criticism, 1644
Pen and brown ink; 6⅛ × 7⅞ in. (15.6 × 20 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 1975.1.799

new assembly hall of the Kloveniersdoelen, the headquarters of one of Amsterdam's militia companies. The result is popularly known as *The Night Watch* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Not only as a painter was he considered first-rate in the 1640s but also as an etcher. While prices for prints were usually expressed in stuivers in the seventeenth century, Rembrandt was able to drive prices up much higher for his important prints. The sobriquet of the famous so-called *Hundred Guilder Print* dates to just a few years after the print was made, in 1649, and speaks volumes.

Depicted on the *Hundred Guilder Print* (fig. 29) are several episodes from the Gospel of Saint Matthew (19:1–30), such as Christ's healing the sick, receiving the children, and rebuking the apostles. The deep, dark shadows, velvety in tone, disappear toward the left; Christ, on the borderline but fully in the light, is the beacon. The dramatic shadow of praying hands on his immaculate robe seems to underline this function.

Rembrandt continued to create portraits in all media. A painted example from this period (fig. 30), dated 1640, in the Museum's collection is of the Amsterdam ebony worker Herman Doomer, father of Lambert, one of Rembrandt's probable pupils (see p. 37); the standard of execution is so high that the portrait seems to have been a personal tribute by Rembrandt. Seven years later, the artist created the well-known etched portrait of Jan Six (fig. 31), for which, interestingly enough, two preparatory drawings are known. The first one (fig. 32)—broadly executed with the reed pen and showing Six looking at the viewer while a dog leaps up against him—is very spontaneous in character. The second one (fig. 33), executed in black chalk, is much more precise, with several differences from the

first sheet; it comes very close to the final print, where a more formal pose replaced the rather nonchalant first design. We may assume that Six requested this shift toward formality, as the print was his commission. He probably also asked for the drawings in order to see how Rembrandt's vision was evolving.

In the 1650s Rembrandt's financial situation changed rapidly. The economic climate of the time, in combination with the artist's extravagance at art sales, unsuccessful art dealings, and unwise speculations, made him unable to meet the mortgage on his house. By borrowing money, he just compounded his debts. In 1656–58 his impressive art collection was put up for sale, and in February 1658 the house in the Breestraat was sold. Not long afterward, Rembrandt moved with his son, Titus, his new common-law wife, Hendrickje Stoffels (see fig. 34), and their daughter, Cornelia (b. 1654), to the Rozengracht in the Jordaan, a more humble area of Amsterdam. A business partnership created by Hendrickje and Titus two years after the move seems to have shielded Rembrandt from his creditors.

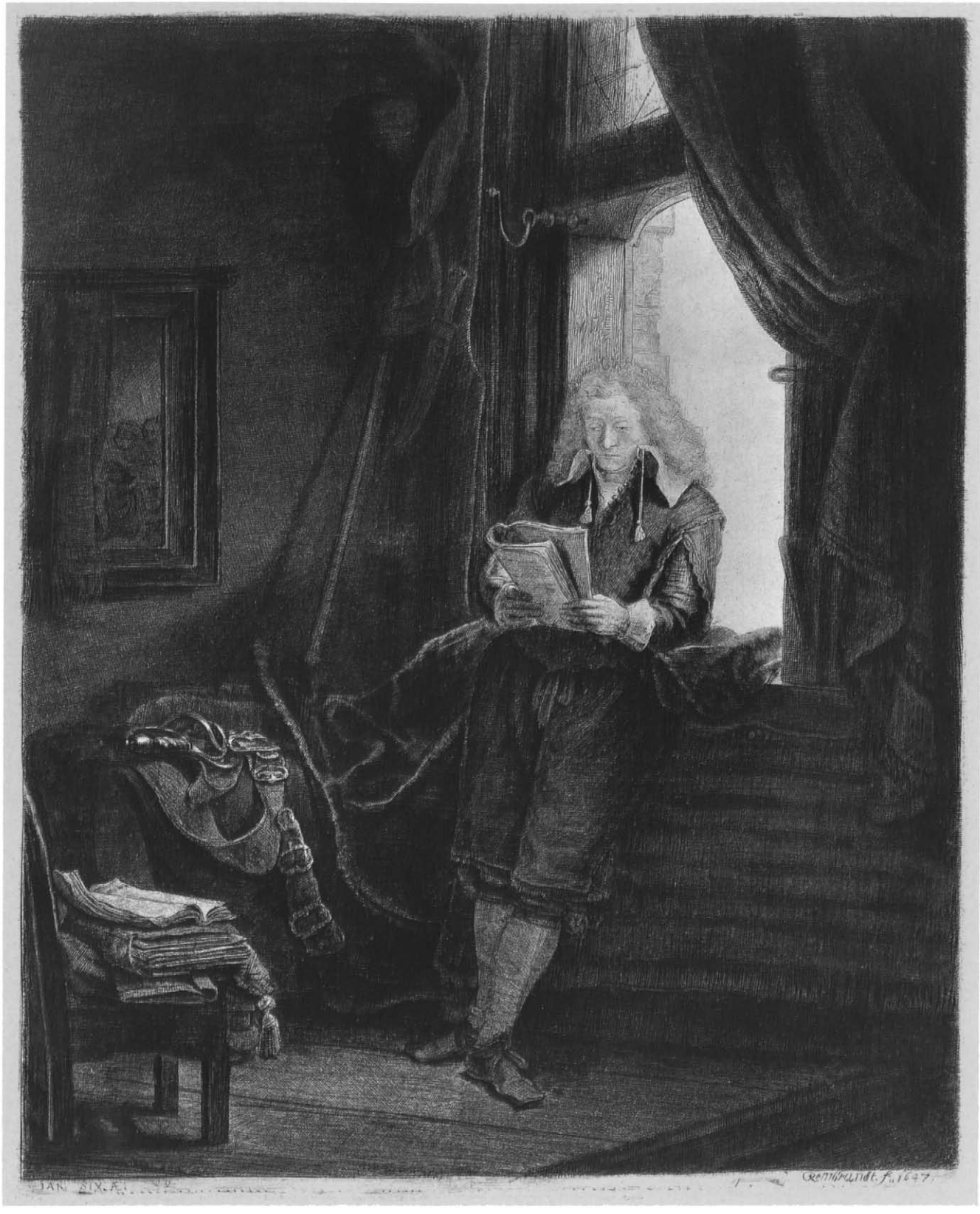
Despite these personal setbacks, the artist continued to paint, draw, and etch. Among the etchings is *The Three Crosses*, created in 1653—an absolute highlight in the history of the graphic arts (figs. 35, 36). His largest print, it has

FIGURE 29
Rembrandt
Hundred Guilder Print, completed 1649
Etching, drypoint, and burin (second state of two); 11 × 15½ in. (28 × 39.4 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 29.107.35

FIGURE 30
Rembrandt
Herman Doomer, 1640
Oil on wood; 29⅝ × 21¼ in. (75.2 × 55.2 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 29.100.1

the impact of a painting. It depicts the moment of Christ's death on the cross, described as follows in the Gospel of Saint Mark (15:33–39): "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.... And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God." Rembrandt depicts the converted centurion kneeling in the center, awestruck, with his arms outstretched. Because the first state of the print was executed entirely in drypoint, the number of fine impressions that could be made before the delicate burr disappeared was relatively small—only about twenty to thirty—resulting, of course, in a high price per print. Understandably, Rembrandt devoted exceptional care to the impressions, several of which he made on vellum (see fig. 35). Vellum is less absorbent than paper and therefore holds more ink on the surface, enhancing the richness of the burr. It is also much more expensive than paper, and thus it would have augmented the exclusive status of the already extraordinary print. For the fourth state of *The Three Crosses* (fig. 36), Rembrandt reworked the plate completely. Poses and expressions of figures changed; complete figures disappeared or were added, horses were turned around, and even a prancing one entered the stage. Most important, however, was his alteration of the light, which darkened the areas on either side of the central cross, especially to the right. The focus is now squarely on Christ in his final moment, crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In his late fifties, Rembrandt still went out to make drawings from life and "on location," such as *Elsje Christiaens on the Gallows* (fig. 37). Elsje Christiaens arrived in Amsterdam from Denmark in 1664 at the age of eighteen to seek employment as a servant. After failing to pay the rent, she got into a fight with her landlady. When the landlady attacked her with a broomstick, Elsje grabbed an ax that happened to be lying nearby, and in the scuffle, the landlady fell down the cellar stairs and died. Elsje ran away (possibly having stolen a few things from a fellow lodger) and was caught soon afterward. The sentence was very harsh: she would be attached to a stake and strangled to death. Her body was to be publicly displayed (with the ax, the instrument of the crime, hanging next to her) and left to rot. The case caused quite a stir, since it was the first time in twenty-one years that a woman had received such a sentence. The public display was also a rare thing. It took place outside Amsterdam, in the Volewijck, on the other side of the Amstel River. The site was reachable only by boat. A drawing by Anthonie van Borssom (fig. 38) sets the macabre scene along the water, showing the bodies of those condemned between 1660 and



32

33

FIGURE 31 *(opposite)*
Rembrandt
Portrait of Jan Six, 1647
Etching (fourth state of four); 10 5/16 × 8 5/16 in. (26.2 × 21.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Felix M. Warburg and his family, 1941 41.1.10

FIGURE 32
Rembrandt
Portrait of Jan Six at a Window with His Dog, 1647
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, heightened with white; 8 1/16 × 6 15/16 in. (22 × 17.7 cm)
Collectie Six, Amsterdam

FIGURE 33
Rembrandt
Jan Six at the Window, 1647
Black chalk; 9 5/8 × 7 1/2 in. (24.5 × 19.1 cm)
Collectie Six, Amsterdam

FIGURE 34
Rembrandt
Hendrickje Stoffels, ca. 1654–60
Oil on canvas; 30 7/8 × 27 1/8 in. (78.4 × 68.9 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Archer M. Huntington, in memory of his father, Collis Potter Huntington, 1926 26.101.9

34

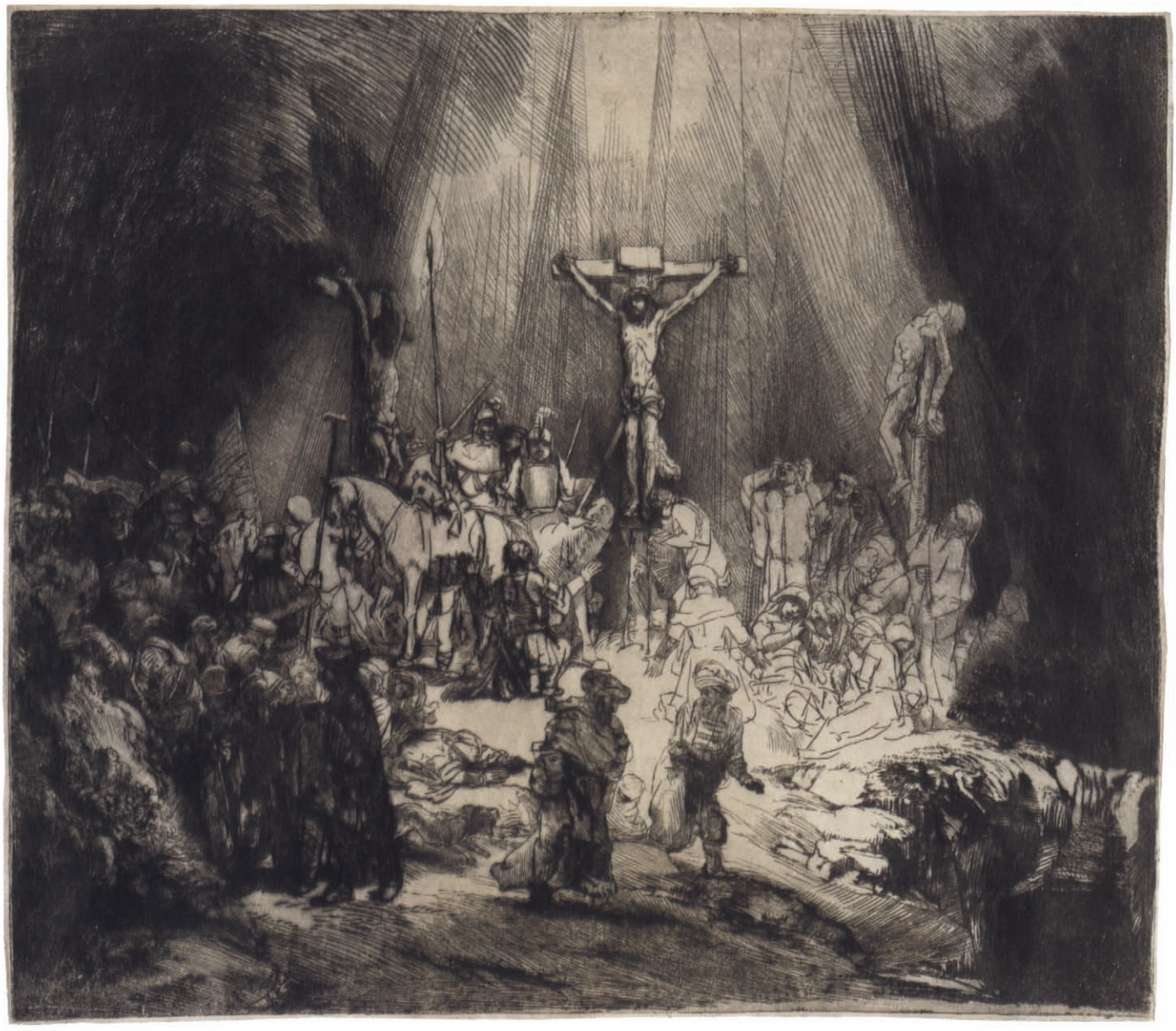


FIGURE 35
Rembrandt
Christ Crucified between Two Thieves,
called **The Three Crosses,** 1653
Drypoint and burin on vellum (first state of five);
15 × 17¼ in. (38.1 × 43.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Felix M. Warburg
and his family, 1941 41.1.31

FIGURE 36
Rembrandt
Christ Crucified between Two Thieves,
called **The Three Crosses,** 1653
Drypoint and burin on laid paper (fourth state of five);
15 1/16 × 17 1/2 in. (38.2 × 44.5 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Felix M. Warburg
and his family, 1941 41.1.33

FIGURE 37
Rembrandt
Elsje Christiaens on the Gallows, 1664
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash;
6¾ × 3 9/16 in. (17.1 × 9.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929
29.100.937

FIGURE 38 *(opposite)*
Anthonie van Borssom (Dutch, 1630/31–1677)
Site of Execution in the Volewijck near Amsterdam, 1664
Pen and brown ink and watercolor; 8 1/16 × 12½ in.
(20.5 × 31.8 cm)
Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

1664. Elsje can be discerned at the far right. To a twenty-first-century viewer, Rembrandt's choice of subject may seem horrid and almost inappropriate; however, one must try to imagine an artist—especially an artist charged with depicting (often cruel) histories—living in such a highly civilized city as Amsterdam. Opportunities to witness an execution or draw an executed felon "from life" were rarer than we might think.

Rembrandt's last years were far from easy. The replacement of his 1661 painting *The Conspiracy of Claudius Civilis* (Nationalmuseum, Stockholm) in Amsterdam's town hall with a pupil's work must have been a bitter pill for him to swallow. It is perhaps surprising to contemplate today, but in the 1650s and 1660s Rembrandt's way of painting must have seemed dated. Generally speaking, the lighter palette and international orientation of such artists as Bartholomeus van der Helst (ca. 1613–1670) and Govaert Flinck—the latter a former pupil of Rembrandt's—were the height of fashion at the time. On the personal front, the blows were even harder for the artist. Hendrickje Stoffels died in 1663, leaving him alone with his two children, Titus and Cornelia. Titus left the house after his marriage in February 1668, but the groom's happiness did not last long, as he died before the end of the year. A year later, on October 4, 1669, at the age of sixty-three, Rembrandt followed his son to the grave. Although at the time he was still highly esteemed, especially as an etcher, in the Netherlands and the surrounding countries, his death seems to have gone largely unnoticed by the outside world.

Rembrandt as Teacher

To officially become a painter in seventeenth-century Holland, one had to be apprenticed, usually at an early age, to a master recognized by the guild. This apprenticeship normally lasted at least two years, during which the student boarded with the teacher for a fee and was taught drawing and painting by him, as Rembrandt had been by Jacob Isaacsz. van Swanenburgh. After this period, the apprentice would become a journeyman and, shortly afterward, a master himself. Rembrandt had pupils throughout his career, from Gerard Dou in the 1620s to Aert de Gelder (1645–1727) in the 1660s, but he definitely did not follow the rules in every case. Some pupils were not real apprentices because they came to him as masters, as he himself had done with Pieter Lastman. Others may not even have been professionals, as implied by an eyewitness, the German painter and writer Joachim Sandrart, who wrote that Rembrandt "filled his house in Amsterdam with all but countless prominent children for instruction and learning." Through written accounts like that of Sandrart and a drawing showing Rembrandt with pupils in his studio, we have some idea of how the master taught. Furthermore, there are a number of illuminating drawings on which Rembrandt made corrections to his pupils' work.

Rembrandt's Studio with Pupils Drawing from the Nude (fig. 39) shows a group of what must

FIGURE 39
School of Rembrandt
Rembrandt's Studio with Pupils Drawing from the Nude, ca. 1650s
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, and black chalk, heightened with white; 7⅛ × 10½ in. (18 × 26.6 cm)
Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt

have been fairly advanced students (at an earlier stage, they would have been drawing after prints or plaster casts, several of which are visible on a ledge, instead of from life). The anonymous creator of this studio interior depicted various moments in the act of drawing. The master looks at the model and draws almost at the same time, while the old man next to him studies the model and the boy sitting on the floor seems to be evaluating his own work. All three have their drawing paper attached to boards; only the young man standing on the left draws in a sketchbook. The two other men are also holding drawing material but are not actively drawing; one seems to be comparing a sketchbook drawing with the model, while the other is watching Rembrandt work. Though probably a composed "group portrait," this drawing in all likelihood reflects what actually went on in the studio. Pupils drew with the master, watched how he drew, and followed his example and his style. The age range that is depicted—logical enough, if some of his students were already accomplished masters—must also be in accordance with the actual situation.

One of Rembrandt's pupils, Samuel van Hoogstraten (see p. 40), included some notes about himself and Rembrandt and indirectly about the latter's teaching methods in his *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst* (*Introduction to the August School of the Art of Painting*) of 1678. All kinds of technical points are mentioned that probably stem from van Hoogstraten's apprentice period and therefore quite likely from Rembrandt himself, such as the advice to empathize as closely as possible with the emotions of the figures in history paintings while looking into a mirror: "thus must one reshape oneself entirely into an actor…in front of a mirror, being both

exhibitor and beholder." Reading this passage, one is reminded of Rembrandt's early etched self-portraits, with their wide range of facial expressions, which must have been made before a mirror (see fig. 6). These prints are generally regarded as studies of emotions and moods for later use in paintings. In another case, when discussing the making of copies—a salutary activity for prospective artists—van Hoogstraten recommends that they first make a rough sketch and then fill in the details. He is quite specific about the contours: "not with a continuous outline that goes around like a black thread" but with close attention paid to the division of light and shade. This emphasis on light and shade is one of the most important characteristics of the drawings of Rembrandt and his pupils.

Van Hoogstraten specifically advocates the correction of pupils' drawings by the master, with the corrections to be marked directly on the work itself: "This is an excellent exercise, and has helped many prodigiously in the art of arrangement [composition]." This, again, is something that Rembrandt did himself. *The Annunciation* (fig. 40), a drawing by Constantijn van Renesse (see p. 45), a pupil of Rembrandt's from the late 1640s to the mid-1650s, shows this practice to full advantage. Not only has the angel been enlarged and moved upward, but the angle of his stance has been shifted. Gabriel has been changed from a timid schoolboy type of angel into a powerful presence—one of which Mary is understandably afraid. A new, more solid lectern hides the extensive bench, creating a simple but effective division between the divine and the terrestrial. Given the number of copies that exist after these corrected drawings, Rembrandt may have kept them in the studio as instructive examples for his pupils to study and to draw.

FIGURE 40
Constantijn van Renesse (Dutch, 1626–1680)
The Annunciation, 1649–50
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown and gray washes, and red chalk, heightened with white; 6⅞ × 9⅛ in. (17.3 × 23.1 cm)
Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

In the 1630s **Jacob Backer** (1608–1651), together with Govaert Flinck (see p. 40), was an associate of Rembrandt's in the business venture of the prominent art dealer Hendrick Uylenburgh. Though already an independent painter, Backer did absorb some Rembrandtesque characteristics in those years. Later, he would become a more cosmopolitan painter of portraits and history scenes, changing to a brighter palette.

The drawing *Weeping Woman Kneeling, Seen from Behind* (fig. 41) may have been made purely as an exercise but may also have been a preparation for a figure in a biblical or historical scene, such as, for instance, Backer's painting *Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery*, recently available on the London art market. The female protagonist of that work, though facing to the right, is shown in a comparable pose, and her clothing looks very much like that of the figure in the Museum's drawing. The painting clearly shows Rembrandt's influence and is logically dated to the early 1630s. The drawing is less Rembrandtesque—for instance, Rembrandt never used blue-gray paper—but should be dated to about the same time.

FIGURE 41
Jacob Backer (Dutch, 1608–1651)
Weeping Woman Kneeling, Seen from Behind, 1633–36
Black chalk, heightened with white, on blue-gray paper; 7 9/16 × 9 in. (19.2 × 22.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1953
53.127.3

FIGURE 42
Ferdinand Bol (Dutch, 1616–1680)
David Showing Saul the Tip of His Coat, 1636–41
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash; 7⅞ × 12 3/16 in. (20 × 31 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase,
Guy Wildenstein Gift, 2001 2001.123

Although Ferdinand Bol (1616–1680) was already registered as an independent master in his native town of Dordrecht in 1635, he underwent a second apprenticeship period between 1636 and 1641 with Rembrandt in Amsterdam. Many drawings and paintings, including the sheet *David Showing Saul the Tip of His Coat* (fig. 42), testify to this fruitful and influential second learning period. The work illustrates an episode in the conflict between David and King Saul. David, who had fled Saul's attempts on his life, had the opportunity to strike back at the king when he was off guard. However, David did not do so and instead cut off a piece of Saul's robe. Here, he shows the fragment to Saul and explains that his intentions are peaceful. This particular story was rarely depicted, but in general, the Old Testament hero David, who would succeed Saul as the king of Israel, was popular with Rembrandt and his pupils. The imposing figure of Saul in Bol's drawing resembles Rembrandt's exotic, orientalizing types of the 1630s. The penwork, somewhat nervous and zigzaggy and not always successful at clearly defining the forms, is typical of Bol. The drawing probably dates to the late 1630s.

It is unknown whether Anthonie van Borssom (1630/31–1677) was ever an actual pupil of Rembrandt's, but some of his landscapes clearly show the influence of the master's etchings; therefore, he is still classified within the School of Rembrandt. In *Canal with a Boat and Ducks* (fig. 43), Van Borssom seems to have been inspired by such works as *The Boat House* and *Canal with a Large Boat and Bridge*, of 1645 and 1650, respectively. Van Borssom's watercolor treats the small, simple rural theme with the same directness, the same intimacy and quietness, as prevail in Rembrandt's two etchings. Rather different in character are the topographical sheets

FIGURE 43
Anthonie van Borssom (Dutch, 1630/31–1677)
Canal with a Boat and Ducks, ca. 1660
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown and blue washes;
8 7/16 × 12 1/4 in. (21.4 × 31.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, From the Collection of Rita and Frits Markus, Bequest of Rita Markus, 2005 2005.330.3

FIGURE 44
Anthonie van Borssom (Dutch, 1630/31–1677)
Elegant Party on the Tafelberg, 1660s
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown, blue, red, and yellow washes; 7 3/16 × 11 5/16 in. (18.2 × 28.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Anonymous Gift, 2005
2005.418.5

Site of Execution in the Volewijck near Amsterdam (fig. 38) and *Elegant Party on the Tafelberg* (fig. 44). The latter depicts a group of fashionably dressed people at the top of the hill known as the Tafelberg, between Oosterbeek and Arnhem, overlooking the Neder Rijn River. Drawings such as these have a homely, descriptive character that one rarely finds in Rembrandt's work.

Lambert Doomer (1624–1700), one of the most appealing draftsmen in Rembrandt's circle, was the son of the Amsterdam ebony worker Herman Doomer, who sat for Rembrandt in 1640 (see fig. 30). Whether and, if so, when Lambert Doomer studied with Rembrandt is unclear. It has been suggested that he was never really one of Rembrandt's apprentices but that, having acquired five portfolios of the master's drawings in 1656–58, he began to copy his work. Doomer indeed made several copies after drawings by Rembrandt, including a copy of *Cottage near the Entrance to a Wood* (fig. 22) on the same (large) scale as the original. How much Doomer admired the depiction of the rustic cottage, with its overgrown pergola, is evident from his inclusion of the motif in several other drawings.

An interesting example of a drawing of Doomer's own invention is *Rebecca and Eliezer at the Well* (fig. 45) of 1696. Depicted is a moment in the quest of Abraham's servant, Eliezer, for a wife for Abraham's son, Isaac (Genesis 24:11–20). Earlier, Eliezer had prayed for guidance, asking that whoever gave him and his camels water at a well near the city of Nahor in Chaldea be revealed as the eligible woman. This turned out to be Rebecca, the granddaughter of one of Abraham's brothers. Eliezer brought Rebecca back to Canaan, where Abraham and Isaac resided. By coincidence, the Museum owns another drawing by a Rembrandt pupil, Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, depicting the sequel of this story: *Isaac's Reception of Rebecca* (fig. 48). A fascinating direct quote from Rembrandt in Doomer's drawing is the man leading a horse to the left of Eliezer, taken from Rembrandt's study *Three Orientals* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Doomer also cited himself;

FIGURE 45
Lambert Doomer (Dutch, 1624–1700)
Rebecca and Eliezer at the Well, 1696
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown, gray, and red washes;
10⅜ × 16⅛ in. (26.3 × 40.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Anonymous Gift, 2005
2005.418.6

for instance, the kneeling dromedary on the right and the standing one in the center are based partly on his 1672 study *Two Dromedaries* (whereabouts unknown), and in the background he incorporated elements seen (and drawn) during his travels in France and Germany. Despite the elements of pastiche, the drawing has a lucid composition, on account of its strong diagonal line and the lively, animated figures that harmoniously frame the two protagonists.

Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (1621–1674) probably worked in Rembrandt's studio between 1635 and 1640 or 1641. Arnold Houbraken, the well-known Dutch art biographer of the early eighteenth century, mentions that van den Eeckhout was Rembrandt's "great friend." Thematically and stylistically, van den Eeckhout was the most versatile member of the Rembrandt circle. He painted and drew historical subjects, genre scenes, landscapes, and portraits. Especially in his drawings, he was a kind of stylistic chameleon. That quality is already visible in his 1642–43 sheet *David's Promise to Bathsheba* (fig. 46), in which Bathsheba pleads with King David to name their younger son, Solomon, as his successor (1 Kings 1:15–21). The general layout depends on Rembrandt's paintings, but the drawing style, with its round, almost calligraphic lines, shows the influence of Pieter Lastman, Rembrandt's second teacher. Throughout his career, van den Eeckhout would share his master's enthusiasm for Lastman.

Other van den Eeckhout drawings in the Museum confirm his stylistic diversity. *Young Man in Broad-Brimmed Hat, Resting His Chin on His Left Hand* (fig. 47) of about 1655 exhibits a beautiful play of light and dark. The white surface of the paper was left untouched to indicate the areas that are bathed in sunlight, while the shadows delineating the form were rendered with the point of the brush. Very different is *Isaac's*

FIGURE 46
Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (Dutch, 1621–1674)
David's Promise to Bathsheba, 1642–43
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, over black and red chalk; 7⅜ × 10⅝ in. (18.8 × 27 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Robert Lehman, 1941 41.187.4

Reception of Rebecca (fig. 48), which shows the finale of the Old Testament story depicted by Lambert Doomer (see fig. 45). The sheet belongs to a group of several drawings in the same cursory style, suggesting that van den Eeckhout probably had a renewed contact with Rembrandt's work in the 1660s.

FIGURE 47
Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (Dutch, 1621–1674)
Young Man in Broad-Brimmed Hat, Resting His Chin on His Left Hand, ca. 1655
Brush and brown wash; 8 1/16 × 5 11/16 in. (20.4 × 14.5 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Walter C. Baker, 1971 1972.118.280

FIGURE 48
Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (Dutch, 1621–1674)
Isaac's Reception of Rebecca, 1660s
Pen and brown ink; 6 3/8 × 9 5/8 in. (16.2 × 24.4 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Anonymous Gift, 2005 2005.418.7

FIGURE 49
Govaert Flinck (Dutch, 1615–1660)
A Woman Asleep, 1633–36
Black chalk; 4¼ × 6⅝ in. (12.1 × 16.6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1947
47.127.1

Initially, the parents of **Govaert Flinck** (1615–1660) tried desperately to keep their son from an artistic career. Only after meeting the Mennonite preacher-painter Lambert Jacobsz. did they allow Govaert to become an artist. After an apprenticeship with Jacobsz. in Leeuwarden, together with Jacob Backer (see p. 34), Flinck moved to Amsterdam to study with Rembrandt, probably between 1633 and 1636. Backer and Flinck were also collaborators in Hendrick Uylenburgh's "academy," or studio. Flinck's early work shows the influence of Rembrandt; the black-chalk study *A Woman Asleep* (fig. 49) is reminiscent of Rembrandt's chalk drawings of about 1640 or slightly earlier, such as *Three Studies of an Elephant with Attendant* (fig. 11). Later in his career, Flinck would move away from Rembrandt's style and dark colors and adopt a brighter palette.

Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627–1678) worked in Rembrandt's studio in the early 1640s. His multifaceted career also brought him to Vienna, Rome, and London, but he always returned to his native Dordrecht. *The Adoration of the Shepherds* (fig. 50) is an early study based on Rembrandt's 1646 painting of the same subject (National Gallery, London). Van Hoogstraten transformed the dark, crowded barn of Rembrandt's vertical composition into a more open and inviting horizontal setting. Besides being an artist, Van Hoogstraten was also a poet and man of letters, author of the aforementioned 1678 treatise *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst* (*Introduction to the August School of the Art of Painting*).

Philips Koninck (1619–1688) first studied with his brother Jacob, a creator of atmospheric landscapes. Later, probably around 1641–42, he entered the studio of Rembrandt. Koninck was quite versatile, as he painted and drew history scenes, landscapes—he was known especially for his panoramas—genre subjects, and portraits. Apart from his artistic talent, he was also active in business, operating a shipping company and an inn.

The Museum owns two very different examples of Koninck's draftsmanship, both of which show the influence of Rembrandt. *The Last Supper* (fig. 51), with John's head resting on Christ's breast (referring to John 13:25), has affinities

FIGURE 50
Samuel van Hoogstraten (Dutch, 1627–1678)
The Adoration of the Shepherds, early 1640s
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, over black chalk, with some traces of white heightening; 2⅞ × 4⅛ in. (7.3 × 10.7 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Given in memory of Felix M. Warburg by his wife and children, 1941 41.21.2

FIGURE 51
Philips Koninck (Dutch, 1619–1688)
The Last Supper, late 1650s
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, heightened with white; 7 11/16 × 11½ in. (19.5 × 29.2 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Frits and Rita Markus Fund, 2001 2001.500

FIGURE 52
Philips Koninck (Dutch, 1619–1688)
River Landscape with a Man Standing by a Boathouse, 1660s or 1670s
Pen and brown ink, brush and gray wash, and reddish brown chalk partially diluted with water; 6 1/16 × 8 13/16 in. (15.4 × 22.4 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Harry G. Sperling, 1971 1975.131.152

with Rembrandt's drawing style of the late 1630s. The extreme light effects and strong emotional content are almost overwhelming, but the sheet is interesting in the context of Rembrandt's interpretation of Leonardo's prototype (see fig. 14). Koninck, who may have known his teacher's red-chalk version, pushed the asymmetry of the composition even further by including a seated figure before the table and a group of men standing apart from it. Koninck's *River Landscape with a Man Standing by a Boathouse* (fig. 52) has a very different mood. The glowing warmth it exudes and the free handling of the pen and brush are quite close to some of Rembrandt's drawings and paintings. Therefore, it is understandable that from the eighteenth to the middle of the twentieth century, this sheet was considered an important work by Rembrandt. However, the high horizon, the richness of detail throughout, and the palette are typical of Koninck, and the drawing is probably datable to the 1660s or 1670s.

In all likelihood, Nicolaes Maes (1634–1693) studied with Rembrandt from 1648 until 1653, when he returned to his native Dordrecht. Soon after, he veered away from Rembrandt's style of painting; Arnold Houbraken notes that he "departed from that manner of painting, the more so when he devoted himself to produce portraits and realized that young ladies in particular found white more pleasing than brown." Maes's drawings, however, continued to reflect Rembrandt's influence. A relatively early work by Maes is the Old Testament scene *Jacob Receiving Joseph's Blood-Stained Cloak* (fig. 53). It depicts the moment when Joseph's brothers show their father the cloak that they had smeared with kid's blood, after having sold Joseph into slavery. The broad, loose reed-pen lines and the skillfully modulated washes recall Rembrandt's technique of the early 1650s; the drawing may therefore date to the end of Maes's apprenticeship or slightly later.

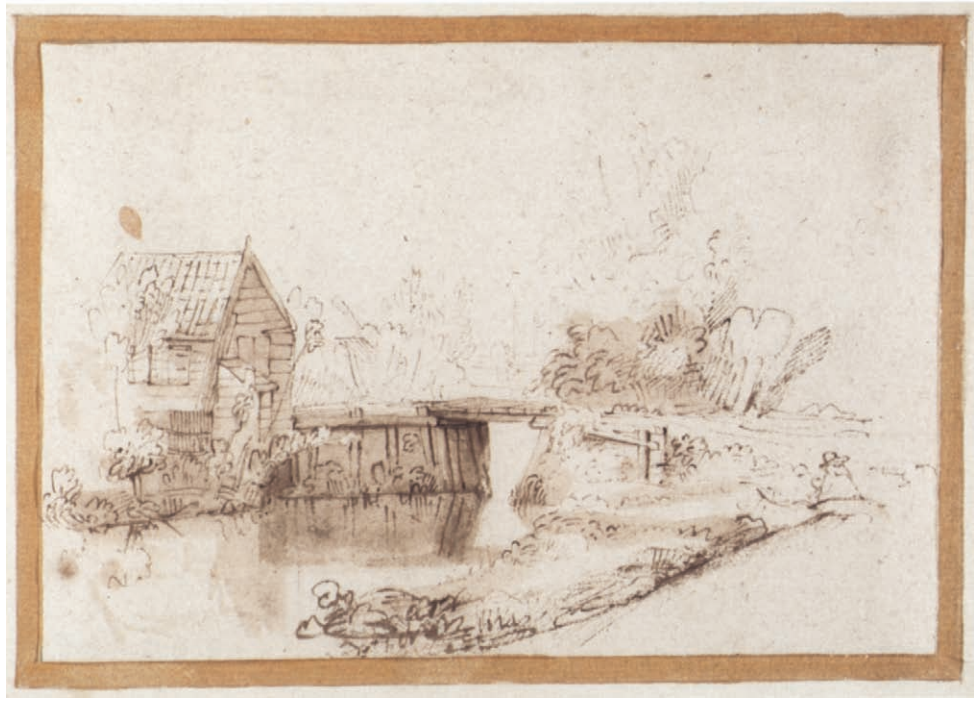
Most of Maes's drawings are religious in content, but he also excelled at genre scenes, such as *The Young Mother* (fig. 54). The pensive young woman, seated next to an infant lying in a cradle, is trimming vegetables while peering at a cat feeding nearby. There is a wonderfully quiet intimacy to this domestic scene, enhanced by the oval form of the drawing. Though broadly rendered, the sketch, which has been dated to 1655–57, is remarkable for its completeness.

Landscape drawings by Maes are extremely rare. Only four are unequivocally accepted, of which *Landscape with a Draftsman Seated by a River, a Bridge and a Cottage Behind* (fig. 55) is one. The figure of the draftsman could be a fellow pupil or Rembrandt himself, who at the time this drawing was made—the early 1650s—was still producing landscape etchings. But it is also possible that Maes placed the figure there purely for purposes of scale.

FIGURE 53
Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634–1693)
Jacob Receiving Joseph's Blood-Stained Cloak,
ca. 1653
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, red chalk, and traces of black chalk; 8 11/16 × 11 7/8 in. (22 × 30.2 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Anonymous Gift, 2005
2005.418.12

FIGURE 54
Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634–1693)
The Young Mother, 1655–57
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash; 5 5/16 × 6 15/16 in. (13.5 × 17.7 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1947
47.127.3

FIGURE 55
Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1634–1693)
Landscape with a Draftsman Seated by a River, a Bridge and a Cottage Behind, early 1650s
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash; 4 3/16 × 6 1/4 in. (10.7 × 15.8 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Frits and Rita Markus Fund, 2002 2002.90



Constantijn van Renesse (1626–1680), who became the town clerk of Eindhoven in 1653, was an amateur artist who studied with Rembrandt from the late 1640s to the early 1650s. A number of his drawings display corrections by Rembrandt (see fig. 40), and others have inscriptions claiming that Rembrandt corrected them. Many of van Renesse's drawings, such as *The Judgment of Solomon* (fig. 56), depict detailed biblical scenes. In 1 Kings 3:16–27, the proverbial wise king of Israel is faced with a conflict between two women—one the mother of a stillborn child—each of whom is claiming the same healthy child as her own. To determine the truth, the king orders a sword to be brought and says, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other." At this—and this is the moment van Renesse chose to depict—the true mother reveals herself by renouncing her claim so that the child could be saved, and the child is restored to her. On the verso, van Renesse wrote, "tweede ordinatie Bij RemBrant 1649" ("second composition at Rembrandt's 1649"), which probably means that *The Judgment of Solomon* was the second drawing van Renesse made as a student in Rembrandt's studio. While the amateur artist did manage to effectively communicate the biblical narrative, the influence of Rembrandt's drawing style is hardly visible.

FIGURE 56
Constantijn van Renesse (Dutch, 1626–1680)
The Judgment of Solomon, 1649
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, over black chalk, heightened with white; 9⅛ × 12⅞ in. (23.2 × 32.7 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 1975.1.806

Johannes Ruisscher (ca. 1625–after 1675) may have been of German origin; it has been proposed that he was the son of the German painter Johannes Rauscher II (d. 1632). Ruisscher's manner of drawing suggests that he was one of Rembrandt's pupils, or at least that he was in contact with the master and his pupils, probably in the mid-1640s. Furthermore, his etchings reveal the influence of the famous etcher Hercules Segers (1589/90–1633/38). From about 1660 onward, Ruisscher worked in Germany, in the duchy of Cleve, in Berlin, and finally in Dresden, where he was court painter to Johann Georg II (1613–1680), elector of Saxony. *Panoramic Landscape with a Herdsman and His Flock* (fig. 57) fits into a group of stylistically and thematically comparable drawings, some of which have subjects that are recognizable as Dutch through depicted buildings; others carry inscriptions identifying them as panoramas of locales near Cleve. Whether the drawing now in the Metropolitan was made in Holland or the Cleve duchy will probably always remain a mystery. Several of the Ruisscher sheets, including *Panoramic Landscape with a Herdsman and His Flock*, were once thought to be by Rembrandt himself on account of their powerful chiaroscuro.

FIGURE 57
Johannes Ruisscher (ca. 1625–after 1675)
Panoramic Landscape with a Herdsman and His Flock,
ca. 1650–60
Pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, over black chalk;
6 7/16 × 12 1/4 in. (16.4 × 31.1 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Frits and Rita Markus Fund;
2003 2003.318

Epilogue

Given the large number of pupils, all of whom tried to draw in the style of the master, used his techniques, and copied his drawings, it will come as no surprise that there was quickly confusion as to who had drawn what—the more so since the drawings were hardly ever signed, either by Rembrandt or by his pupils. This confusion culminated in the eighteenth century, when collecting drawings became fashionable all over Europe. Every collector wanted to own a few Rembrandts; however, since the general taste was more in favor of finished drawings than quick studies, many collectors (and dealers) upgraded student drawings, which often have a more finished appearance, into works by the master. Examples of such once "upgraded" works in the Museum's collection are, among

FIGURE 58
School of Rembrandt
Studies of Two Men and a Woman Teaching a Child to Walk, 1645–50
Pen and brown ink; 6⅝ × 5⅛ in. (16 × 12.9 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Harry G. Sperling, 1971 1975.131.154

others, Ferdinand Bol's *David Showing Saul the Tip of His Coat* (fig. 42), Philips Koninck's *River Landscape with a Man Standing by a Boathouse* (fig. 52), and Constantijn van Renesse's *Judgment of Solomon* (fig. 56). On the van Renesse sheet, the French eighteenth-century collector Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville even added Rembrandt's name in the lower right corner.

Only in the twentieth century have scholars started to clear out the chaos. On the one hand, they have tried to look afresh at Rembrandt's work by concentrating on the signed and documented works and creating around those an oeuvre that is relatively certain; on the other hand, work has been done to individualize the oeuvres of the pupils. As a result, the aforementioned works by Bol, Koninck, and van Renesse were dethroned and returned to the pupils' oeuvres. In many cases, such "relocations" are not yet possible, as with the Rembrandtesque *Studies of Two Men and a Woman Teaching a Child to Walk* (fig. 58). In 1922 this drawing turned up on the art market in an album containing drawings mostly by Nicolaes Maes. As there are some basic similarities to other drawings by Maes, it was thought to be by him. However, closer comparison with authentic works by the Dordrecht master has made this attribution doubtful. At the moment, the sheet belongs to the large School of Rembrandt, until someone recognizes the hand of a specific artist. This process of comparing, shifting, and reattributing works from Rembrandt's school, though it has already borne important results, will certainly not be concluded soon.

Nevertheless, the status of a drawing or print, whether it is by Rembrandt, by a pupil, or attributed to an artist from Rembrandt's circle, should not distract us from the main issue: the enjoyment of the beauty, vigor, and spirit of these works. Govaert Flinck's son, Nicolaes, owned a fabulous collection of old master drawings, including many Rembrandt sheets, and told his friends that after a day of hard work at the office "nothing refreshed him more" than going through his portfolios of "paper art." His statement has lost none of its validity today.

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